



SRS Citizen's Advisory Board

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Nuclear Materials Committee Meeting Summary

Aiken Federal Building, Aiken, SC
December 9, 2002

The Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) Nuclear Materials Committee (NMC) met on Monday, December 9, 2002, at the Aiken Federal Building, Aiken, SC. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the following topics: the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) letter on F-Canyon and the associated CAB recommendation, the draft recommendation on Long Term Storage of Stabilized Plutonium, and to hear public comment. Attendance was as follows:

CAB Members

Ken Goad*
Murray Riley*
William Lawrence*
Wade Waters*
Bill Willoughby*
Perry Holcomb

DNFSB

R. T. Davis

Stakeholders

Rick McLeod
Lee Poe
Bill Bengston
Bill McDonell
Jerry Richardson
Mike French
Russ Messick
Ed Russell
Paula Austin
John Austin
Leon G. Chanow

DOE/Contractors

Virginia Kay, DOE
George Mishra, DOE
John Dickenson, WSRC
Lyddie Broussard, WSRC

* NMC Members present

** Note: Beckie Gaston-Dawson, Jimmy Mackey, and Dorene Richardson are CAB members of the NMC, but were unable to attend this session.

Welcome and Introduction

Ken Goad, NMC Chair, welcomed the group, requested that each attendee introduce themselves and their affiliation, and encouraged participation from all. He stated that the NMC continues to be concerned about canyon utilization issues and the purpose of the meeting was to discuss a recent Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) letter on F-Canyon and the associated CAB Recommendation 156, F-Canyon Suspension. The second part of the meeting was to review a draft recommendation on the Long Term Storage of Stabilized Plutonium.

DNFSB Letter on F-Canyon and CAB Recommendation 156, F-Canyon Suspension

Mr. Goad opened the floor for general comments. Lyddie Broussard asked each attendee to review their informational packet and identified the contents including an email from Sachiko McAlhany, DOE Nuclear Materials Program Division. She stated that while Ms. McAlhany had been unable to attend this meeting, she had requested that this email be entered into the record (see attachment 1).

Committee members began a discussion of the contents of their packets, expressed concern about the future of both F and H Canyon, and requested clarification of several issues. They questioned if DOE had provided enough information for the committee to still support a cold, dark, and dry F-Canyon. Members raised questions such as what does the DNFSB mean when raising the concern about funds for decommissioning and is DOE planning a shutdown of H-Canyon.

In response to the question on funds for decommissioning, Todd Davis, DNFSB Site Representative, stated that the key issue is when does decommissioning begin. He said there is ongoing communication between DOE and the DNFSB about whether or not deactivation is the first step to decommissioning. He stated that the DNFSB does not believe the requirements for certification as required by the National Defense Authorization Act have been met at this time. He further stated that the DNFSB continues to work with DOE to understand the schedule for material processing in H-Canyon and the transition of H-Canyon ownership to the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA). According to Mr. Davis, the DNFSB is requesting DOE to provide a plan for material disposition. When asked, Mr. Davis replied that at this time there has been no written response from DOE to the November 8, 2002, letter from the DNFSB.

Mr. Goad asked John Dickenson, WSRC Nuclear Materials Management Division Program Manager, to explain the current status of F-Canyon. Mr. Dickenson stated F-Canyon is considered to be in suspension and work on those activities are ongoing. According to Mr. Dickenson, WSRC has recently submitted a Deactivation Project Plan for F-Canyon to DOE for approval. He said DOE has indicated that they will complete their review of the plan by January 2003. He emphasized that authorization to proceed with deactivation would not be forthcoming until that review is completed. Mr. Dickenson fielded additional questions about the status of the Americium/Curium transfer to High Level Waste, disposition plans for PUREX solvent, and other questions relative to F-Canyon suspension activities. He said these issues had been part of past presentations and they would continue to be updated through the quarterly presentations on F-Canyon. The next update will be provided at the January 2003 CAB meeting.

He was asked about the meeting handout identified as the October 30, 2002, letter from DOE to WSRC that had been referenced in the DNFSB letter. He said the DOE letter did not represent any decisions but rather direction to WSRC to conduct analysis. He reminded the NMC of past presentations on the Performance Management Plan (PMP) and the focus on accelerated clean up. He said that earlier this year they had been told about a series of teams created by Assistant Secretary Jessie Roberson to evaluate specific areas of concern as part of the Top-to-Bottom Review. He said one of these teams is working to find ways to expedite the disposition of all EM

nuclear materials and conclusions reached by this team may change some previously identified disposition pathways for nuclear materials. Mr. Dickenson reminded committee members that Mr. George Klipa, DOE-SR, had discussed formation of this team with the CAB and had indicated that the team was expected to provide recommendations by March 2003.

Further discussion by the committee members concluded that in light of the issues raised by the DNFSB letter, a request for a meeting with DOE was needed prior to the next full CAB meeting. Mr. Goad stated a letter would be drafted to DOE summarizing the following concerns:

1) DOE's response to Recommendation 156 does not adequately address item 2 of that recommendation. The NMC had requested that DOE provide a material management plan to the SRS CAB, which identifies the types of material requiring disposal, the proposed disposition path, and the funding mechanism to accomplish the proposed treatment/disposal.

2) A meeting with DOE is requested as soon as possible to discuss the material management plan and overall canyon utilization. Specific issues to be included in the discussion are the end state determination of F-Canyon, and the disposition of legacy materials with the accelerated shutdown of H Canyon.

Draft Recommendation for Long Term Storage of Stabilized Plutonium

The committee discussed the draft recommendation and concluded that it was premature at this time. Mr. Goad agreed to withdraw the recommendation.

Public Comment

Bill Willoughby wanted the committee to be aware that the Russians were making progress in converting their stockpile of uranium to low enriched uranium (LEU). He said that they had successfully processed 150 of the 500 metric tons of uranium. He felt that they were making more progress in this area than we were in this country.

With no other public comments, the meeting was adjourned.

Meeting handouts may be obtained by calling 1-800-249-8155.

FOLLOW UP ACTIONS

1. Provide a copy of Table 5.2-1 fuel as identified in DNFSB letter to all members (L. Broussard)
2. Provide a copy of the safety documentation to Lee Poe and Wade Waters (Virginia Key)
3. Draft letter to DOE (Ken Goad)